

May		
1st	<i>Phalera bucephala</i> (L.)	Freshwater
3rd	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i> (L.)	Compton Down
6th	<i>Noctua pronuba</i> (L.)	Cranmore
8th	<i>Hadena perplexa</i> (D.&S.)	Freshwater

I should like to mention the following observation that I witnessed on Compton Down on 14th April. This was a pair of *Phragmatobia fuliginosa* (L.) in copula settled on the grass accompanied by five other males crawling over the unfortunate couple. This is the first time that I have seen this species assemble in this way.

Finally I should like to record two very early sightings of the Large Red Damselfly (*Pyrrhosoma nymphula*). Andy Butler saw two at Alverstone on 9th April and my mother noticed one in the garden at Freshwater on the following day.— S.A. KNILL-JONES, Roundstone, 2 School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight.

Drunken goat moth larvae

I have also had occasion to resuscitate “drunken” goat moth larvae, (*vide* Clerck, J., 1995. Drunken goats. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* **106**: 82). Mine were fed on wholemeal bread and apple, in the recommended fashion, but the container was rather tall and narrow and, on one occasion, the apple became somewhat decayed. Fumes of some sort overcame my larvae and one morning I found them insensible. They were apparently completely lifeless but not flaccid or misshapen, as may happen with disease. Suspecting that they were merely intoxicated, I placed them on some absorbent paper and gently massaged them, so as to cause air to be forced in and out of the spiracles. After about 30 minutes they began to wriggle slightly and after a further 30 minutes had made a full recovery. Since then they have again fed voraciously and are now (April 1995) just becoming active after the winter. I wondered how much the effect was due to alcohol fumes, of which the container certainly smelt, and how much to CO₂ anaesthesia.— M.R. YOUNG, Culterty Field Station, University of Aberdeen, Newburgh, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 0AA.

[Note: All three moths duly emerged in July 1995 – M.Y.]

Stigmella continuella (Stt.) (Lepidoptera: Nepticulidae) in Scotland

In September 1988, Mark Young introduced *Stigmella continuella* (Stainton, 1856) to the Scottish list when he discovered mines of this species on the Glenfarrar NNR (VC96) and Ariundle NNR (VC97) (Agassiz, D. (1990) *Ent. Rec. J. Var.* **102**: 131). Last year this species turned up in two further, widely separated localities. On 10.ix.1994 the author found two vacated leafmines of this species on Birch at Camghouran (Grid Ref. NN5455), Rannoch, Perthshire (VC88). On 21.ix.94 a survey for a Forestry

Authority/Scottish Natural Heritage research project, conducted by David Barbour, Allan Watt and Colin McBeath, yielded vacated mines of this species in Birch in two separate localities in Knapdale. The first was in a spruce plantation with 30% mix Birch near Loch Buic (Grid Ref. NR7988) and the other was in a birchwood besides Daill Loch (Grid Ref. NR8189), both in Knapdale Forest, Kintyre (VC101).

These new records could possibly indicate a recent invasion of Scotland by this species, although my own opinion is that it is a low density species that is under-recorded. At the Perthshire site both mines were close together on the succulent leaves of small shoots arising directly from the main trunk. The location of the mines at the other sites was not recorded.— K.P. BLAND, 35 Charterhall Road, Edinburgh EH9 3HS.

An outbreak of the Lackey moth, *Malacosoma neustria* L. 1758 (Lep. Lasiocampidae) in Beckton, east London, May 1995

Early in May 1995 whilst checking the infestation of *Euproctis chrysorrhoea* (L. 1758) in Beckton, east London, I was surprised to see so many active “nests” of the Lackey, *Malacosoma neustria* (L. 1758). I had already collected a batch of ova of this moth from Sloe in February in the same area, but did not expect to be greeted by such an apparent population explosion. Soon after the initial sightings I counted the number of larval “nests” to be found. As the larvae were already well advanced, a “nest” for our purposes was any clearly-defined group of larvae feeding separately from another. As some of the larval clusters were so close together it cannot be assumed that they were not originally from the same egg batch.

Sixty-six were counted in all in a very small area alongside a busy main road, roughly running opposite the recently inaugurated Docklands Light Railway. The following foodplants were noted along with the numbers of larval “webs”: Sloe 43; Rose 11; Hawthorn 5; Hazel 2; Oak 1.

E. chrysorrhoea and *M. neustria* did not seem to be in competition as larvae were seen to share facilities on more than one occasion *i.e.* the Brown-tails would sit on the Lackey's “web”. Outside the Beckton area, larvae were noted singly on Hawthorn and on *Prunus* en masse in Walthamstow, also in May 1995.

Plant (1993) mentions *M. neustria* as an “...occasional pest species which can reach plague proportions in some years, although normally it causes little more than local defoliation of hedges”. Gómez de Aizpúrua (1988) cites this species as being a pest in Spain on “numerous occasions”. Soria (1987) details “an enormous quantity of larvae found in Mazarambroz (Toledo) in 1981 on Oak and describes serious outbreaks on Oak, specifically, *Quercus pyrenaica* Willdenow, in the sixties. In 1987, more than 20,000 hectares of Oak were attacked north of Madrid in the Sierra de Guadarrama, leading to defoliation on a massive scale.